

D18 (GRCA 8217)

Dear Interested Party:

Subject: Greenway V Trail; Pipe Creek Vista to the South Kaibab Trailhead

Reference: Request for Comments on Proposal (General Scoping)

The National Park Service (NPS) is in the initial planning stages for the construction of the Greenway V Trail, a one-mile long trail segment that would link the rim trail that currently ends at Pipe Creek Vista to the South Kaibab Trailhead on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park (Enclosure 1). The rim trail currently provides universal access for pedestrians from Grand Canyon Village along the rim to Yavapai Observation Station and Mather Point, ending at Pipe Creek Vista, a viewpoint parking area and shuttle bus stop. There is currently no dedicated pedestrian path through Pipe Creek Vista and no formalized path along the rim to the South Kaibab Trailhead.

Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of taking action is to continue implementation of the greenway trail system as envisioned in the 1995 GMP. The GMP outlined a system of multi-use, accessible trails throughout the park that, once constructed, would encourage non-motorized modes of travel and would provide a greater opportunity for visitors to experience the resources of the park. Taking action at this time would allow for a continuous connection from other already completed phases of the greenway to the South Kaibab Trailhead.

There is a need for providing a safe, accessible hiking trail connection from Mather Point and popular areas of Grand Canyon Village to the South Kaibab Trailhead. There is a need for providing a continuous pedestrian trail, linked to the existing rim trail, from the lodges and restaurants in Grand Canyon Village and Canyon View Information Plaza to a primary trailhead into the canyon, the South Kaibab Trailhead. There is a need to provide universal access to the South Kaibab Trailhead so that all visitors can view the trail and experience the activity at the trailhead. There is a need for establishing one, easily-recognizable accessible trail in the area between Pipe Creek Vista and the South Kaibab Trailhead to help visitors find their way between these two destinations where numerous social trails are causing resource damage. There is also a need for addressing vehicular and pedestrian safety concerns at Pipe Creek Vista created by the narrow parking areas, lack of space for vehicles to back up and lack of designated walkways.

The primary objective for improving this area is to:

- 1) Improve the experience of visitors and restore damage to park resources in the area between Pipe Creek Vista and the South Kaibab Trailhead by:
 - a) Providing one primary access route that is safe and universally accessible for visitors between these two areas.

- b) Improving the safety and ease of movement of pedestrians and vehicles in the Pipe Creek Vista parking areas, while maintaining, as much as feasible, the existing parking capacity.
- c) Providing a continuous primary trail corridor from the developed areas of Grand Canyon Village to the South Kaibab Trailhead.

Project Proposal – To meet the purpose and need for taking action and this project objective, NPS has developed a preliminary project proposal. Under this proposal, an approximately one-mile-long trail would be constructed between Pipe Creek Vista and the South Kaibab Trailhead (Enclosure 1). The trail would be for pedestrians only (in keeping with other rim trail segments on the South Rim) and would be universally accessible. It would be approximately 8-9 feet wide and paved for most of its length. The trail would follow an existing utility corridor away from the rim edge, reducing the level of new ground disturbance necessary for construction.

In the Pipe Creek Vista area (Enclosure 2), the trail would be approximately 5 feet wide when adjacent to existing parking areas to minimize the loss of available parking space. The existing shuttle bus stop would be moved slightly (from its current location at the northwestern end of the vista parking area) to take advantage of existing shade trees and canyon views. Several new pull-in parking spaces would be created in the vegetated island between the two paved parking areas, to more safely accommodate vehicles and allow for them to maneuver off of the highway. Parallel parking spaces would be designated in the parking areas that are currently unmarked.

In the South Kaibab Trailhead area, an accessible trail connection from the parking area to the trailhead itself would be created. The need for additional site amenities in this area (e.g. seating, additional signage, drinking water) is currently being explored.

We Invite Your Comments - The project proposal described above is a preliminary option currently under consideration and is subject to change. We invite any issues or concerns you may have with the project proposal at this time, to ensure that we identify all of the relevant issues and are able to develop a reasonable range of alternatives for analysis in the Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA will include a detailed analysis of impacts to park resources from implementing the proposal and any other action alternatives developed based on the issues raised, including an analysis of taking no action. Once the analysis of all alternatives is complete, NPS will select a preferred alternative for implementation and will distribute the EA for public review, prior to making a decision.

Information on this project, and other planning efforts at Grand Canyon National Park, can be found on the park's website at www.nps.gov/grca/compliance. If you wish to submit any comments during this public scoping period, you may mail comments to the name and address below, email Deborah_lutch@nps.gov or post comments online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/grca>. The public scoping period will be open for 30 days. It is the practice of the NPS to make all comments, including names and addresses of respondents who provide that information, available for public review following the conclusion of the environmental assessment process. Individuals may request that the NPS withhold their name and/or address from public disclosure. If you wish to do this, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. Commentators using the website can make such a request by checking the box "keep my contact information private." NPS will honor such requests to the extent allowable by law, but you should be aware that NPS may still be required to disclose your name and address pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

We will make all submissions from organizations, businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses available for public inspection in their entirety. The public scoping period will be open until July 3, 2006. If you wish to submit comments on the proposed Greenway V Trail please do so by this date.

Superintendent
Grand Canyon National Park
Attn: Office of Planning and Compliance
P.O. Box 129
Grand Canyon, AZ 86023

We appreciate your input on this project. If you have any questions, please call Debbie Lutch or Lori Crystal, Project Planning Leaders, at (928) 774-0095 or (928) 226-8226 (respectively) or John Beshears, Project Manager, at (928) 638-7730.

Sincerely,

Joseph F. Alston
Superintendent

Enclosures (2)

If you would like to receive a hard copy of the environmental document for this project when it is complete, you may indicate this when commenting using the PEPC website (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/grca>) or you may contact Deborah Lutch at the address above, at (928) 774-0095, or at deborah_lutch@nps.gov, and one will be sent to you during the comment period. If you do not respond to this request, a hard copy of the environmental document will not be sent to you. However, please be aware that this environmental document and other environmental documents are routinely available for your review on the Grand Canyon National Park website at www.nps.gov/grca/compliance or at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/grca>

Enclosure 1. Proposed Greenway V Trail, South Rim, Grand Canyon National Park.



Enclosure 2. Proposed Changes at Pipe Creek Vista Overlook, as part of the Greenway V Trail, South Rim, Grand Canyon National Park.

Pipe Creek Vista Preliminary Project Proposal

